



City of Wheatland

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CITY COUNCIL MEETING

STAFF REPORT

Date: July 27, 2010

Agenda Item:

Subject: Sign Permit Fees

Prepared by: Tim Raney, Community Development Director

Recommendation:

City staff recommends that the City Council adopt the attached resolution establishing fees for sign permits.

Discussion:

In 2007, the Wheatland City Council approved the City of Wheatland Sign Ordinance, which authorizes and regulates the use of signs in order to:

- A. Encourage a desirable urban character consistent with the general plan;
- B. Preserve and improve the appearance of the city as a place to live, work and visit;
- C. Eliminate confusing, distracting or dangerous sign displays that interfere with vehicular traffic;
- D. Promote commerce;
- E. Provide for fair and equal treatment of sign users;
- F. Promote ease of sign ordinance administration;
- G. Provide for eventual elimination of nonconforming signs on a fair and equitable basis.

Section 19.30.020 of the Sign Ordinance states that any person applying for a sign permit shall, at the time of filing application, pay to the City a fee to cover processing,

plan-checking, inspection and issuance of the permit in an amount as established by resolution of the City Council. It is appropriate that the City establish a fee program to cover its actual costs in processing a sign permit application. Otherwise, these costs are borne, not by the applicant, but by the entire City through its General Fund.

Wheatland Municipal Code section 19.309.030 exempts certain signs from requiring sign permits, and therefore, would not be subject to fees. These signs include exempt signs, a-frame signs, and window signs. Exempt signs include nameplates, bulletin boards, construction project signs, memorial signs, traffic or other governmental and public safety signs, and garage sale signs.

The City's Sign Ordinance requires permits for temporary signs. Temporary signs include any sign, banner, flag, balloon, pennant, balance or display including logos, graphics, advertising, information or message, constructed of cloth, canvas, light fabric, cardboard, wallboard, paper or other non-permanent materials, with or without frames, typically portable in nature, and intended to be displayed for a short period of time only. Municipal Code section 19.55.030 states that the fee for a temporary sign permit shall be a nominal filing fee not to exceed \$15.

The Sign Ordinance also requires that a building or grouping of buildings containing six or more businesses, offices or other uses (commonly understood to be a shopping center or business park) submit and have a master sign program approved by the Planning Commission.

The current process for sign permits involves the applicant submitting an application at City Hall with intake, distribution and processing by City staff. The application is distributed to planning and building staff who review for consistency with City codes. Comments are returned to City Hall staff who issue a sign permit. Once installed, the sign is inspected by building staff. A Master Sign Program additionally requires approval of the Planning Commission and the proposed fee is proposed to be the same as the current Design Review application fee.

City staff and I have evaluated the average amount of time to perform the tasks described above for a typical sign permit application (not including a Master Sign Program application). Based on our evaluation, we have determined that the average sign permit application requires the following: approximately one hour of City Hall staff time for the intake, distribution, processing and issuance of the Sign Permit application; approximately one half hour or planning staff of one half hour for projects not part of a Master Sign Program and 15 minutes for those that are consistent with a Master Sign Program; building staff time of one half hour for plan-check and an hour for inspection. Because the Sign Ordinance includes setback requirements from right-of-ways, the fees do not assume any time for the City Engineer.

The current hourly wage cost (including benefits) of the staff involved in these tasks was applied to the average time per sign permit application. This calculation resulted in the proposed fee amounts set forth below. The temporary sign permit calculation

generated a higher amount, but the proposed fee is set at \$15 because of the cap in the sign ordinance.

Proposed Fees

Master Sign Program	Actual Cost with \$2,740 Initial Deposit
Individual Signs under a Master Sign Program	\$242/application
Individual Signs not part of a Master Sign Program	\$269/application
Temporary Signs	\$15/application for a sign or group of signs

These fees assume that the individual sign application is consistent with the Sign Ordinance, Master Sign Program, and Building Code. Signs which are not consistent and require additional staff time may be billed at actual cost based on the City's actual cost fee/billing policy in accordance with City Resolution No. 01-07, as amended.

The Temporary Sign fee is based upon the fee outlined in the Wheatland Sign Ordinance. The temporary sign permit processing tasks apply to each temporary sign or grouping of temporary signs; therefore, the \$15 will be paid for each grouping of temporary signs. For example, political signs (a type of temporary sign) need only submit one sign application for all the proposed signs and indicate the intent to comply with the Sign Ordinance.

For a Master Sign Program application, the fee will be based on the City's actual cost fee/billing policy in accordance with City Resolution No. 01-07, as amended.

Alternatives:

The City Council could choose to not implement sign fees and fund sign permits from the General Fund.

Fiscal Impact:

The intent of the Sign Fees is to be revenue neutral for the City and to cover costs associated with processing Sign Permit applications.

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF WHEATLAND
ESTABLISHING A SCHEDULE OF FEES
RELATING TO SIGN PERMITS**

WHEREAS, Wheatland Municipal Code section 19.30.020 authorizes the City Council to approve by resolution fees relating to processing, plan-checking, inspection, and issuance of a sign permit application and sign permit;

WHEREAS, the Community Development Director has prepared a report explaining the need for and calculation of the proposed fee amounts; and

WHEREAS, The City Council now desires to adopt a schedule of fees related to sign permits as proposed in the fee report;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council that the schedule of fees for processing sign permit applications, attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference, is hereby adopted pursuant to Wheatland Municipal Code section 19.30.020. Commencing 2011, the fees shall be adjusted annually each July 1 based on the previous year's change in the Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers, U.S. city average, all items, as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The City Clerk shall make this adjustment and keep and maintain a current schedule of applicable fees at City Hall.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Wheatland on this the 13th day of July, 2010 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Enita Elphick, Mayor

Attest:

By: _____
Lisa J. Thomason, City Clerk

EXHIBIT A

CITY OF WHEATLAND SCHEDULE OF FEES FOR SIGN PERMIT APPLICATIONS

Fee Schedule Pursuant to Wheatland Municipal Code section 19.30.020:

Master Sign Program	Actual Cost with \$2,740 Initial Deposit
Individual Signs under a Master Sign Program	\$242/application
Individual Signs not part of a Master Sign Program	\$269/application
Temporary Signs	\$15/application for a sign or group of signs

These fees assume that the individual sign application is consistent with the Sign Ordinance, Master Sign Program, and Building Code. Signs which are not consistent and require additional staff time may be billed at actual cost based on the City's actual cost fee/billing policy in accordance with City Resolution No. 01-07, as amended.

The Temporary Sign fee is based upon the fee cap Wheatland Municipal Code section 19.55.030. The temporary sign permit processing tasks apply to each temporary sign or grouping of temporary signs; therefore, the \$15 will be paid for each grouping of temporary signs.

For a Master Sign Program application, the fee will be based on the City's actual cost fee/billing policy in accordance with City Resolution No. 01-07, as amended.